

PEACHAM TOWN AUDITORS
MEETING
Monday June 22, 2015
Peacham Town Offices
UNAPPROVED

PRESENT:

Auditors: Charlie Byron (Minutes), Jan Eastman (Chair)

Staff: Tom Galinat, Rebecca Washington

Public: Stan Fickes

1. The meeting planned for June 10 was moved to June 22.
2. The Auditors Postponed discussion of Town Report improvements to the Next meeting. These will include:
 - 2.a. Format. Identify changes to improve readability, clarity, usefulness, especially in financial reports. Assess other town's reports for good ideas.
 - 2.b. Financial reporting timeliness. Do a trial close and report earlier in the year to reduce time pressure after December 31.
 - 2.c. Budgeting. Similarly, produce a year-end forecast early enough to enable the Selectboard to have adequate time to develop the next year's budget.
 - 2.d. Bids. Request bids for the printing to try to lower costs.
3. The Auditors revised their plan for the balance of the year with focus on Town Report production and enhancement of the Report and the budgeting process. The key milestones include:

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Milestone</u> |
|------------------|---|
| June 22, 11 AM | Auditors meeting. Jan will review transactions implementing change in Cemetery Endowment manager along with the June reconciliation. Review other town's Town Reports and plan enhancements. |
| Sept 14 | Tentative - Discuss Town Report with School Board - 6PM |
| Oct. 13, 12 Noon | Auditors meeting. Generate Year-end Forecast based on financials through 9/30/15. Identify assumptions such as school payments. |
| Dec. 15, 12 Noon | Auditors meeting. Review updated Year-end forecast based on financials through 11/30. Review new reporting for Town Report. Bid Town Report printing. |
| Jan 12, 12 Noon | Auditors meeting. Generate Auditor's Report for 2015 (assumes books successfully closed). Select printer for Town Report. |
| February 7 | Town Report to printer. |

February 19 Town Report distribution deadline
March 1 Town Meeting 2016

4. Julie Kempton resigned as Auditor. We thank her for her service over many years.
5. The Auditors will further review Town Reports from neighboring towns at their next meeting. We agreed to try to identify useful enhancements during 2015 and to be ready to implement these in the 2015 Town Report. Charlie will investigate the possibility of printing financial reports as 2-page spreads.
6. Tom Galinat will request either a meeting with the School committee for Sept 14, or a brief position on the agenda at a regular meeting, to discuss Town Report enhancements.
7. The Auditors examined a sample of 3 delinquent tax payments, out of a total of around 25, in the Town's books to ensure that the Town's tax policy is being followed.
8. The Auditors agreed to review transactions the Town Treasurer has authorized CCSU to make. This will be performed in December.
9. The Auditors agreed to recess the meeting until July 7 at Noon.

PEACHAM TOWN AUDITORS
MEETING
Tuesday, July 7, 2015
(Continued from June 22, 2015)
Peacham Town Offices
UNAPPROVED

PRESENT:

Auditors: Charlie Byron (Minutes), Jan Eastman (Chair), Stan Fickes

Staff: Tom Galinat, Rebecca Washington

Public: none

10. Stan Fickes was appointed by the Selectboard as a new auditor replacing Julie Kempton. We thank Julie for her service over many years. We welcome Stan and thank him for his willingness to serve.
11. The Auditors reviewed 2014 Town Reports from Barnet, Cabot, Danville, Groton, Marshfield, and the Twinfield School District. We identified a number of features to try to emulate or adopt.

From Barnet's report:

- 11.a. Section organization. Include blank pages as Section intros. Put all organization reports in one place, alphabetical.
- 11.b. Comparative tax rates; but include only rates and add totals.
- 11.c. Town Financials: include report of reserves, combined balance sheet.
- 11.d. Use portrait orientation where possible; 4 numeric columns (prior actual, current actual and budget, proposed budget).
- 11.e. Report in whole dollars (e.g. rounded).
- 11.f. Treasurer's Report - include background information.
- 11.g. Consider printing footnotes (similar to Barnet's) in separate publication and online.
- 11.h. Delinquent tax lists - consider including names for large or long-standing delinquencies. Consider requesting statistics on payment plans (number and \$ total, paying and not, etc.)

From Marshfield's report:

- 11.i. Budget Committee Report - useful summary of key recommendations.
- 11.j. Tax Rate Impact - historical budgets and tax rates provides good context.

From School Report sections:

11.k. Need more narrative information for context:

- prose introduction
- number of kids in school by level (preK, elem, etc), home or private schooled as known, receiving schools.
- Standouts such as # of valedictorians, awards received, or other distinctions.

Other observations:

- 11.l. Consider omitting some employee compensation information (seems unnecessary).
 - 11.m. Consider adding information to assist in understanding the derivation of the proposed tax rate: components and calendar for defining these. It is OK that the final tax rate is estimated as long as that is explained.
 - 11.n. School Board letter should reference the proposed budget. (??)
 - 11.o. Financial reports should build to the amount to be voted on.
12. The Auditors agreed to recess the meeting. The Auditors will hold working meetings (e.g., not warned) as needed to complete development of proposals as describe above. These will be adopted or revised at the meeting in October (to be warned).